JAN 7

MUSEUM NEWS

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

NUMBER 73 TOLEDO, OHIO DECEMBER, 1935

MOSQUE LAMP ARABIC, XIV CENTURY

THE LIBRARY
OF THE CLEVELAND
MUSEUM OF ART

MUSEUM NEWS

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

EDITOR: BLAKE-MORE GODWIN, M. A., DIRECTOR, THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

NUMBER 73 TOLEDO, OHIO DECEMBER, 1935

Art is that science whose laws applied to all things made by man make them most pleasing to the senses. *George W. Stevens.*

EDITORIAL

THE Museum is closing another year of progress. It has been less spectacular than last year, with the almost simultaneous exhibition of Whistler's Mother, and the Foreign Section of the Carnegie International, or the year before, marked by the opening of the new buildings. But it has been a year notable for the sustained interest of students and visitors.

We are pleased to have noticed also a marked increase in receipts from the dues of Members.

We take this not only as an indication of improved economic conditions, but also as proof of a substantial interest in the Museum. We are accordingly gratified.

The Museum is a vital factor in the civic and educational life of the community. It offers the finest possible avenues for the employment of leisure time, for the stimulation of the intellect, for the enjoyment of the real things of life.

Fortunately during times of stress we have been able to maintain our efforts unimpaired in their public aspects. We hope to further extend them as their use justifies and our finances permit.

To this end we solicit the continued allegiance of our Members, for the moral support which they give to the institution by their interest in it and the financial aid which they provide through their annual contributions.

AN ARABIC MOSQUE LAMP

THE successors to the Roman art and industry of glass-making in the Near East were the Mohammedans. Under the Romans glass manufacture had flourished in Syria to a greater degree than in any other locality. The unsettled conditions which accompanied the decline and destruction of the empire had their effect upon its commerce and industry, and in time the making of glass in the form in which it had been carried on for centuries by the Syrians practically ceased.

Apt pupils had learned its rudiments, however, and the Mohammedans eventually developed the art into one of its most glorious phases. Starting with forms quite similar to those made by their Syrian predecessors, they adapted them to their own purposes and produced the goblet, the perfume sprinkler and at length the mosque lamp.

Aside from these changes in form, the great contribution of the Mohammedans was the application to glass of colors in enamel to produce a rich decorative scheme. Interesting as their plain blown and moulded glass may be, it does not compare in magnificence to the enamelled ware, which is the most gorgeous and decorative use, save stained glass windows, to which the material has ever been put. And strangely enough, while this glorious art of decorating glass vessels was being developed in the Near East, the making of hollow ware languished in Europe, but at the same time in flat glass the French were producing and installing in their churches those great windows which are today the glory of Le Mans, Chartres and many another cathedral.

The origin of enamelling upon glass has long been discussed, claims having been advanced for an Egyptian birthplace for this refinement as well as for the invention of glass, which we now think had taken place in that country nearly two thousand years before the beginning of our era. However, Schmoranz[1] long ago pointed out that the oldest dated pieces, which come from the twelfth century, show Persian workmanship, and hence must have originated either in Persian Irak or in some other center of Persian craftsmen such as Aleppo or Damascus, cities which were also the great trading centers of the Mohammedans.

Further, there is frequent mention in fourteenth century French inventories of glasses made or decorated at Damascus,[2] which, while perhaps merely meaning that the glass came through Damascus, or was of a type associated with Damascus, still indicates the contemporary belief that the actual manufacture was carried on there.

Still other evidence for the making of this glass at Damascus is contained in writings of the time, such as Clavijo's account[3] of his embassy to the court of Timour Bey, between 1403 and 1406, and in the encyclopedic Masalik al-Absar written in 1337-1338 in which its author al-Umari, the Egyptian State Secretary, who should have known, or been in a position to get the facts, states, "Egypt, Syria, Irak and Asia Minor obtained from Damascus the prettiest articles that were manufactured there, especially bows, copper ware inlaid with gold and silver, things of gilt and glass-work . . . "[4]

Finally, the enamelling of glass ceased at the end of the fourteenth century, and it was in 1402 that Tamerlane sacked Damascus, putting to the sword all of its inhabitants save the artisans, whom he carried off to Samarkand. Hence, as the origin of the earliest known pieces of enamelled glass can be ascribed to Damascus, and as the art ceased with the destruction of the city, we are safe in considering this, the oldest city in the world, its chief center.

Although a considerable number of Arabic enamelled glass vessels, goblets, pokals, perfume sprinklers, flasks, bowls, and, perhaps most important of all, our Toledo Flagon, all of purely secular use, were produced, it was to the ornamentation of his religious edifices that the Mohammedan glass worker, just as his brother artisan in Europe, devoted his highest efforts. While the one was producing the stained glass windows to admit light to the cathedral from without, the other was making lamps to illumine the mosque from within.

Of these mosque lamps probably one hundred and fifty are in existence today, about half of them being in the Arabic Museum in Cairo. In form all are quite similar. The foot is either a roll or a rounded cone. The body approaches the globular, and the broad neck flares to the mouth. About the body are three or six handles to which chains were attached for suspension from the ceiling or arcades of the mosque. Within was either a candle-holder, or a small lamp suspended by wires from the lip. The fabric of the glass is usually of a rich tone ranging from honey-color to light amber, although occasionally deep blue was used. Upon this body decoration in gold and colors was applied.

The mosque lamp owned by the Toledo Museum is of the light amber-colored glass, decorated with foliate ornamentation and with inscriptions in blue, red and green. The chief decorative element of mosque lamps was ordinarily an inscription of honor, either particular or general, forming a broad band of Arabic characters around its body. Such an inscription, which, due to the beautiful calligraphy to which Arabic adapts itself, is peculiarly fitting ornamentation,

adorns our lamp. On a deep blue background are the red outlines of the characters and of the foliate motifs which help to fill the space. Within the red outlines remain traces of the gilding which originally made the inscription as well as the pattern of leaves most brilliant.

The inscription may be translated "For his excellency, the noblest, the high, the liegeman, the master es-Seifi Sheikhu en-Nasiri."[5] As Sheikhu, an Amir of the Mameluke sultan Al-Maliki en-Nasir, died in 1356, we may assume that the lamp was made in his life time, and hence determine an approximate date for it. Other lamps made for him, and which with ours probably once adorned the mosque of Sheikhu in Cairo, are now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, the Arabic Museum at Cairo, and in the British Museum.

On the neck of the lamp are three circular armorial bearings with the red chalice, between which is an inscription from the Koran in blue letters within red outlines. Further ornamentation is given by red, white, green and yellow foliage, the background of all of which was once gilt.

The lower portion of the body, beneath the inscription, is decorated with three red cups within circles and yellow, red and green stylized leaves and red outline drawing, originally against a gold background. Gorgeous as the lamp, with its rich enamel colors against the warm glow of the glass now is, it must have been far more magnificent before time had erased the full glory of its gilding.

This lamp, which a kind providence has preserved unbroken and intact, except for the loss of its gilding, for nearly six hundred years, was formerly in the collection of Dr. F. R. Martin of Stockholm. It was shown in the Exhibition of Mohammedan Decorative Arts at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1930.

[1] Gustav Schmoranz, Old Oriental Gilt and Enamelled Glass Vessels, English Version, London, 1899, p. 7-8.

[2] W. B. Honey, A Syrian Glass Goblet. The Burlington Magazine, June, 1927, p. 293.

[3] A Descriptive Catalog of the Glass Vessels in the South Kensington Museum. London, 1878, p. lxvi.

[4] C. J. Lamm, Mittelalterliche Glaser, etc. Berlin, 1930. Vol. I, p. 256, and p. 493, n. 61.

[5] Catalog of Loan Exhibition of Mohammedan Decorative Arts, Detroit Institute of Arts, Oct.-Nov. 1930, No. 112.

COUNTRY DOG SHOW JEAN MAC LANE

PURCHASED FROM OUR SUMMER SHOW

THE Country Dog Show by Jean MacLane was acquired for our permanent collection from the Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings held in the Museum last summer. It represents, presumably, the children of the artist with their dogs, standing out in bold relief against a background of other exhibitors and their exhibits, lightly sketched, and sky.

The two cameo-clear faces are instinct with the enthusiasm and interest of youth, and recall the success which the artist has had

as a portraitist. The picture is characterized by the luminosity and brilliant clean color which has been notable in its artist's work for some years, and which makes her pictures centers of interest in every exhibition in which they appear.

Jean MacLane has had a distinguished career. She studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and with Frank Duveneck who, through his many years of teaching at Cincinnati, was the most influential art instructor of the middle west. She was awarded a bronze medal at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at Saint Louis in 1904. The first prize went to her at the International League, Paris, in 1907-1908. At the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1914 she received the Lippincott prize. A silver medal was accorded to her at the Panama-Pacific Exposition at San Francisco in 1915. She became an Associate of the National Academy in 1912 and a full member in 1926.

Jean MacLane is the wife of an equally distinguished painter, John C. Johansen, who is also represented in our collection. Both are artists of strong individuality, so neither has submerged the other, but each has developed independently, profiting the while from the experience of the other.

Her art has passed through many phases, and she has progressed from the Whistlerian tradition of tonal painting to a fine strength of form and color coupled with brushwork of breadth and spontaneity. The freedom of her work of today is the result of her sound training and her fundamental grasp of construction. Knowledge and experience give her the ability to so paint that her pictures show the greatest facility.

She is represented in many other museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Syracuse Museum and the National Gallery of Art in Washington.

AN AMERICAN PAINTING ACQUIRED

GORDON SAMSTAG is a young artist. He was born in 1906 in New York. He began to study art while employed there as a hotel room clerk. He moved to Saint Louis and pursued his art education at Washington University while working intermittently as a candy butcher on trains, as a soda dispenser, and at such other occupations as would yield an honest penny.

He returned to New York and entered the National Academy classes under Charles W. Hawthorne. The necessities of life required him to divide his time between the pursuit of the Muse and such more mundane occupations as taxi driving, selling orange juice, and keeping the school store.

PROLETARIAN GORDON SAMSTAG

But he had talent and ability. He received a scholarship from the Leopold Schepp Foundation for two summers of study at Provincetown, and later a fellowship from the Tiffany Foundation, enabling him to work at that comfortable and inspiring institution for four summers.

In 1928 he won the handsome Pulitzer Scholarship, the Cannon prize and other school prizes, and betook himself to Paris for a year's study. In 1930 he was awarded the Clarke prize at the National Academy, and since that year he has taught drawing there.

He writes that he has his best financial success with his paintings of still life, but prefers people as his subjects, and uses still life only to save on model fees.

His works have been included in the exhibitions at the Corcoran Gallery, the Pennsylvania Academy, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Cleveland, Rochester and Brooklyn Museums. Only this year did he make his debut in Toledo with the splendid picture entitled Proletarian, which at the close of the exhibition became a part of our permanent collection. It was deservedly one of the most popular pictures in the exhibition. The subject is a colored maid at work at her cleaning. He says that he likes best to paint people at work in their natural surroundings. Here he has done so. Against the gray wall the figure clad in a pale yellowish dress and wearing a white cap, stoops to her labor. The pose has a natural and instantaneous quality. The blue-white enamel of the bucket, the yellow of the dress, the white of the cap and the brown of arms and face, make interesting color notes against the neutral but vibrant gray of the wall. The picture gives the feeling that the artist has accomplished his purpose, which is perhaps the ultimate to be desired.

A SCULPTURE BY DESPIAU

FROM the studio of Rodin there emanated four important sculptors, Bourdelle, Maillol, Bernard and Despiau. Dominant though the personality of the master was, each of the four completely freed himself from its trammels, and stands, artistically speaking, upon his own feet. This emancipation can in the instance of no one of the four be considered as revolt from the principles of Rodin, but rather as a predictable evolution, with the natural tendency to swing away from what may be regarded as personal mannerisms or excesses.

Charles Despiau was born at Mont-de-Marsan in 1874. He went to Paris at the age of seventeen and entered the School of Decorative Arts, where he studied for two years under Hector Lemaire. He then went to the School of Fine Arts where his teacher was Barrias, a sculptor of some considerable note at that time. He began to exhibit his portrait busts in 1898, and after 1901 exhibited regularly at the National Society of Fine Arts. His ability early attracted the attention of Rodin, who employed him in the execution of a number of important works. He did not at any time, however, cease to carry on his own independent work.

His output has now reached considerable proportions. It is regularly characterized by sound construction and good craftsmanship. It evidences that he is sure of himself and of his materials. He is quoted by one of his biographers, Claude Roger-Marx, as

MAN SEATED CHARLES DESPIAU

saying "I am only a sculptor and express myself only by plastic means. When I begin to analyze a head, my aim above everything else is to discover the essential rhythm of it, to master the relations of its various parts and to tie up the one to the other by true transitions. I force myself not to describe such or such a picturesque detail, or such a state of mind, but to realize the harmony between the

sculptural elements which I exalt. Under such conditions, I am creating works that are durable and organized. I seek in my busts to attain a profound resemblance."

Despiau is usually thought of as a sculptor of portrait busts, for he has been most prolific in that field. But the full figure has not escaped his attention, and he has executed monumental works, the most notable being that to the historian Victor Duruy and the Del Valle monument in Buenos Aires.

The work by Despiau recently acquired by the Toledo Museum is, though in small size, of the full figure. It is a bronze of a figure for a monument, and represents a young man, nude, seated. It is well proportioned, firmly and surely modelled, simply handled. A sculptor of a previous generation would probably have titled it Resting Athlete, but Despiau has no romantic notions, so it is called simply Man Seated. Our bronze is the second of an edition of six, and was formerly in the collection of Miss Lillie P. Bliss.

COMING EXHIBITIONS

During the month of January there will be an exhibition of Modern Japanese Prints in Galleries 15, 16, 17 and 19. The prints constitute the work of the ten best Japanese wood-block designers during the past five years and augment a similar exhibition which was held in 1930. A fully illustrated catalogue will be issued.

In Gallery 22 a selection of Modern Japanese Prints from the Hubert D. Bennett collection will be hung. Thus there will be an exposition of this interesting phase of Japanese graphic arts which will be unusual and not to be seen in any other museum of art.

In February the Third International Exhibition of Etching and Engraving will occupy the temporary exhibition galleries. About one hundred prints by many of the important artists of Europe and America will be included in this exhibition.

An exhibition of great importance will be shown during March and continuing to April 19,—the European paintings comprising the Foreign Section of the Carnegie International Exhibition. Toledo will be one of only three cities to have this exhibition, the others being Pittsburgh and Cleveland.

The exhibition consists of more than two hundred and fifty paintings, the works of the leading contemporary artists of twenty countries. The painting which won the first prize, Elvira and Tiberio by a young Spanish artist, Hipolito Hidalgo de Caviedes of Madrid, will be among those to be shown here.

OFFICERS OF THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

ARTHUR J. SECOR, Chairman of the Board

WILLIAM A. GOSLINE, Jr., President — JAMES BENTLEY, Second Vice-President

MRS. EDWARD D. LIBBEY, First Vice-President — C. JUSTUS WILCOX, Treasurer

Trustees until January, 1936	Trustees until January, 1937	Trustees until January, 1938
MRS. EDWARD D. LIBBEY	CLEMENT O. MINIGER	RATHBUN FULLER
CARL B. SPITZER	WILLIAM M. BOOKER	C. JUSTUS WILCOX
SINCLAIR WALBRIDGE	HENRY L. THOMPSON	ARTHUR J. SECOR
HUBERT D. BENNETT	WARD M. CANADAY	IRA W. GOTSHALL
EDWIN J. MARSHALL	JAMES BENTLEY	JULIAN H. TYLER
JOSEPH W. ROBINSON	MOST REV. KARL J. ALTER	WILLIAM A. GOSLINE, JR.
	WILLIAM E. LEVIS	JOHN D. BIGGERS

Honorary Trustees

ALVIN B. TILLINGHAST — EDWARD B. GREEN — MRS. GEORGE W. STEVENS

EXECUTIVE STAFF OF THE MUSEUM

BLAKE-MORE GODWIN, Director
J. ARTHUR MacLEAN, Curator of Oriental Art
ELISABETH JANE MERRILL, Supervisor of Education
NELL L. JAFFE, Assistant Curator
DOROTHY BLAIR, Assistant Curator
EULA LEE ANDERSON, Asst. Supervisor of Education
GEORGE M. FURMAN, Secretary to Director
MARY JO ADAMS, Bursar
MOLLY OHL GODWIN, Dean, School of Design
CATHERINE M. POUCHER, Registrar
IDENE McALEESE AYERS, Instructor
ELINOR C. KNOBLAUGH, Instructor
BETTY PARKER, Instructor
MARY VAN DOREN, Music
DAYTON J. HUTCHINS, Supt. of Buildings
RALPH K. EGGART, Supt. of Grounds

CAROLINE RANSOM WILLIAMS, Honorary Curator of Egyptology

MUSEUM HOURS

The Museum is open daily from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. and on Sundays and Holidays from 1 to 5 P.M.

Admission to the Museum and its regular educational activities is free at all times.

There is no charge for tuition in its School of Design.

MEMBERSHIP

Anyone interested may become an Annual Member of the Museum by paying Ten Dollars a year, thereby securing all privileges of the Museum and contributing to the support of much of the free educational work for all of the children of Toledo.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

I DESIRE to become a member of The Toledo Museum of Art, paying ten dollars ($10) a year for full privileges for myself and members of my immediate family.

I hereby constitute Blake-More Godwin, Director of the Museum, my attorney in fact in my name and stead, to subscribe my name to the Articles of Incorporation.

Name .....

Address .....

Date .....

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART